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Gough Lond. 136 (21).

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A

# *True Description*

OF THE

# MINT.

Giving an Account of its first becoming a Place of Refuge for *Debtors*; the Extents of its Antient and Modern Limits. The *Manners*, *Ways*, and *Customs* of the Inhabitants: with their *Character*, *Nature* and *Temper*.

AS ALSO,

Their LAWS and METHOD of *Punishing* a *BAILIFF* and his *Follower*, or *Setter*, with the *OATH* they cause him to take: And several other things, relating to the *MINT* in General.

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------ *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis*
*Auri sacra fames.* Virg.

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TO THE

# *Gentry of the* MINT,

Howſoever Diſtinguiſh'd, whether

## BENCHERS or SHELTERERS.

Gentlemen,

*I Do not doubt but I ſhall have many a bitter Curſe for my Deſcription of the* Mint, *but 'tis below me to take notice of thoſe* Curs, *who can only* Grin *and not Bite. I follow the Golden Rule of rendering to every Man what is his Due. I Appeal to You, who are the propereſt Judges, for the Truth of the following Relation: And if I am a little Severe on the* Mob, *(thoſe Shrubs, that Live under you tall* Cedars) *I hope I make Amends in wiping off the Odium which is ſo univerſally caſt upon the People of the* Mint. *By declaring everything at large (tho' in few Words) I am Confident I have brought over a great many to Favour you, who being Prejudic'd before (eſteeming this Place much worſe than the* Fryars, *in obſtructing*



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*the Execution of Juſtice ) are ſenſible of their Error, in ſetting every thing in a clear Light.*

*The antient* Romans *Conquer'd much, and loſt it again ; but You, like a careful, provident, induſtrious Heir, keep entire not only what was left you, but have increas'd your Patrimony, remembring the Words of the* Poet,

Non minor eſt virtus quam quærere
parta tueri.

*May your Power, your Priviledges, and your Liberties never be diminiſhed, but increaſed rather than leſſen'd : For, as a late Judge ſaid, they that are Confin'd there ( meaning the* Mint) *ſuffer Miſery enough : So may the Higher Power ſay to you, as* Venus *did to* Æneas,

Perge modo et qua te ducit via dirige greſſus.

*This is the ſincere Deſire, and ſhall be back'd, upon Occaſion, by the ſmall Intereſt of,*

Gentlemen, Your Humble Servant.

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# *A True Description of the*

# Mint *and* Minters.

THERE are few People, I believe, so very Ignorant, but know that a *Mint* is a place apppointed for *Coining*, or making the *Lawful Money* of the Realm; and 'tis from *hence*, that the Subject of the following Treatise does originally derive its *Name*. I shall not trouble my Reader with its *Chronology*, let it be sufficient to assure him, that it is of greater Antiquity than the *Fryars*, or any other Place that usurp'd a Priviledge; and we may reasonably conclude, that it is preferable and superior to them, not only from its retaining its Customs, when those others are abolish'd and destroy'd, but for many other Reasons, which shall be made appear in their proper place.

O *Mint!* Thou kind and hospitable Hostess, who readily dost stretch forth thy Arms to embrace those that will fly unto thee, who refuseth not to Shelter all that will come under thy Wing! May you always be thus favourable. Thou, who art the Defender of the Fatherless, Supporter of the Widow, and Succourer of the poor insolvent Debtor; who being Protected by thee, can safely take his Rest, secure from the devouring Jaws of the insatiable Creditor: May your good Intentions prosper, your Power be continued, and may you ever remain without Corruption or Dissention.

Tho' some People repine at this place of *Refuge*, and

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and endeavour all they can to Destroy those that are in it; yet after all, 'tis but a kind of *Purgatory*, or *Middle-state*, a *Medium* between close Confinement, and absolute Liberty. And if our *Freedom* be an estimable Jewel, a Purchase we would not part with, it must certainly be a great *Mortification* to any Man, that is depriv'd of it *six* Days in *seven*, who being penn'd up in such narrow Compass, dares not stir beyond its Precincts without running the greatest Risque imaginable.

Had they to whom we are Indebted, any Compassion, were they endu'd with the least Grain of Charity, they could not but think this Place a sufficient Punishment for those they Compel to remain here: But such is the Malice, such the Avarice of some Men, that tho' they are sensible that the Person they Arrest has not wherewith to Pay them, nay, can scarce get Bread to eat, yet will they cast him Head-long into a Goal; and thereby not only render him utterly uncapable of ever giving them what is their Due, but the poor Prisoner must Perish in a short time, and leave his Bones to Satisfy their *greedy Minds*.

I am Confident, there is no *Debtor* would willingly abide here, could he Live safely in another Place; for the anxious Thoughts of being in continual Jeopardy if he stirs abroad, and his being Confin'd to the various Humours of the confused Multitude, the medly of People that is in the *Mint*, is enough to Distract him: For 'tis here, as in *Charon*'s Boat, you must throw off your Pride, be prepar'd for long-Suffering, and cloath yourself with Humility and Patience (of which you had need have a large Stock) and retain nothing but *Money* to Defray the Charges of your Residence; for *no longer Pipe, no longer Dance*.

I cannot Treat so Distinctly (as I do design) of the *Liberties, Privileges, Laws, and Customs* of this Place; nor

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nor the *Manners*, (which are very few) *Nature*, and *Temper* of the People, without making a Distinction of the Inhabitants, or Body Politick; which is a Compound of Three, or to speak more intelligibly, is divided into Three Ranks, or Classes, the *Benchers*, *Shelterers*, and the *Minters*.

And as there is a small Dispute, who it was that first brought up, and who it is that does at present maintain and uphold the Priviledges of the *Mint*; I shall endeavour to end the Difference, and set these matters in a clear Light: In order to which, I must begin with the first Branch of my Division, namely, the *Benchers*.

## I. *Of the* BENCHERS.

These are a mixture of all Degrees of Mankind, who are either Arrested, and so Confin'd by a *Queen's-Bench-Writ*, or else they remove themselves hither from other Prisons (the *Fleet* excepted) by Virtue of an *Habeas Corpus*. The *Rules* or *Liberties* of the *Queen's-Bench* were in former Days very small; they reach'd but from a little below the Prison to St. *George's* Church, including one side of it; but in process of time, the *Mint* was annex'd thereto, which extended as far as the present Sign of the Two *Fighting Cocks* Westward, and was border'd on the *South* with the *Ditch* which divides it from St. *George's* Fields; and at the *North-side* it had a Gate at the hither-end of *White-Cross-street*. These were the Antient Boundaries of the *Mint*.

Now, to undeceive the Reader, who may think perhaps, that every Prisoner has the Liberty of the *Rules* of the *Bench*, I must acquaint him, that this Favour is granted only to such as can Purchase it, and give

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Security for their not running away; tho' rather than fail, their own Bond, with a handsome Gratuity, will serve; the Nature of performing it is thus. You either get some Friend who is acquainted with the *Marshal*, or else you go to him yourself, and make your Conditions upon as easy Terms as you can; but you must consider, that nothing is to be done rashly, therefore a Bottle or two is a good Preparative. Neither must you Repine if you do not accomplish your Design the first time; for as he cannot tell how many *Actions* you have charg'd against you, and how Weighty they may be, what Character you bear, and whether your Security be *substantial*, so a Second or Third Meeting, you know, is very proper, for the refreshing and supporting Nature. But supposing you do bring things to bear, and obtain your Desire, yet there's *Half a Crown* a Week for *Chamber-Rent*, tho' you never go near it, which must be punctually paid upon Demand, or you suffer for it severely.

Tho' some People may think 'tis very easy for those who have the Priviledge of the *Rules*, to make their Escape, which is not impossible, yet is there much more Difficulty in it than at first imagin'd. For the *Marshal* has at least Threescore *Spies*, some of whom are Gentlemen, and are glad to curry Favour upon any account. These Emissaries are dispers'd into most Companies, they insinuate themselves into your Acquaintance, make private Enquiry what Hours you keep, how, or after what rate you Live, whether you have plenty of Money, and such like; and then, according to their Information, they make their Report to the *Marshal*, so that you cannot turn any way but you have an Eye over you. But should a Prisoner escape, it would not break the *Marshal*'s Heart, for he seldom continues longer than Three Years successively, and then exchan-

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ges

ges with the *Warden* of the *Fleet*, and are generally each others Priſoner.

I hope the Reader will pardon the Digreſſion I am going to make, ſince it may be partly beneficial, not only to the *Benchers*, but to thoſe whoſe Misfortune it may prove to be Priſoners: And firſt as concerning the latter; I would adviſe every Perſon that deſigns to turn himſelf over to the *Queens-Bench*, to get a Friend to treat with the *Marſhal*, before he has brought his Habeas Corpus, by which means he will ſave conſiderably; for if he proffers any thing reaſonably, the *Marſhal* will be glad to accept of it, eſteeming it a piece of Prudence, *to play at ſmall Games rather than ſtand out.* For, thinks he, ſhou'd I refuſe this Offer, he will apply himſelf to the *Warden* of the *Fleet*, who will be glad to receive it. But if you remove yourſelf without Compounding, then you lye wholly at his Diſcretion; who, if you be *Fat*, will have as much Mercy on you, as a *Hawk* has of his Prey; and before you get from under his Roof, you muſt expect to ſhare the ſame Fate with a Sheep that comes from under a *Hedge*, loſe a *Fleece* or two, and be glad you come off ſo well.

A Second Advice to the *Benchers* in general is this, Let no Man know your Concerns; make no Body acquainted with your Circumſtances, neither be familiar with too many; and if you have occaſion to go to to *London*, or elſewhere, either do it privately and ſingly, or go in Company with but one or two and let 'em be Perſons whom you know have gone out pretty often. For if the *Marſhal* finds you out, he immediately Calls you in, pretending you might be taken upon an *Eſcape-Warrant*, and when you are a Second Time in cloſe Confinement, you muſt expect to Pay a much rounder Sum to get out, than you did for your firſt Enlargement.



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## II. *Of the* SHELTERERS, *and the present Limits of the* MINT.

Having Treated of the *Benchers* as succinctly as possible, the *Shelterers* follow next: And here is a Composition enough to poison the *Devil*; Here is *Tag-rag* and *Bob-tail*, all sorts of Trades, Professions, and Religions, from the *Circumcised Jew*, down to the *Pharisaical Christian*, who, in the main, is as great a *Reprobate*, as any *Infidel*, *Jew*, or *Heathen*! Not but there are some good, honest Men, though their Number is small. It may be enquir'd, how these People got footing in this place: Why truly, I design to reveal that Mystery; therefore to answer the Question the Querist must know that the Number at first was very thin; that they took Shelter under the *Bencher*'s Wings, these were their Protectors, and they had their Invitation from them. If we give Credit to the Report of some malicious People, we shall find that this Kindness of theirs, was rather a Principle of Self-Satisfaction, than an Act of Charity to Relieve those they took under their Umbrage, as is concluded from hence. Revenge is what we are very prone too, and so depraved is Man's Nature, that instead of *forgiving* an Injury, he endeavours all he can to return it. Now the *Bailiffs*, those *Caterpillars* of the Nation, being the Occasion of the *Benchers* losing their Liberty, they invited some of their Neighbours who were about to forsake their Habitations, for fear of an *Arrest*, to come and Live among them; these they suppos'd would prove a Bait, a Train to get the aforemention'd Vermin within their Clutches; and then fearless of any Punishment, they cou'd inflict what Punishment on 'em they thought fit.

There were but few Houses in the *Mint* in those Days, so that when any of these *Riots* happen'd, either

the *Constables* came in to seek the Offenders, or else the *Sheriff* rais'd the *Posse*, and so the *Shelterers* were forc'd to fly till the *Hurly-burly* was over. The Number of those that had fled hither, increasing Daily, the Owners of the Ground thought they could not lay out their Money to better Advantage, than in Building, and truly their Gains were so considerable, that they set their Houses at any Rent, so greedy were the People of coming into them. It must be confess'd, the *Benchers* were the first that brought up the Priviledges of the *Mint*, but 'tis as certain, that the *Shelterers* do at present maintain them, and have very much enlarg'd their Liberties; they have taken *White-Cross-street* on the *North*-side, and bear such absolute Sway over St. *Georges-Fields*, nay even to *Cupid's Gardens*, that they will not suffer any Person to be Arrested within those Limits: Nay, should a *Bailiff* come within Smell of those places, if they lay hold on him, he is as severely Handled, as if he had come in the middle of the *Mint*. Now to give every one his Due, let us speak sincerely our Opinion, and then see if the *Shelterers* have not repaid the *Benchers* their Civility; for any one of them can traverse the places limited, walk to *Moor-Shanks*, and Drink, or play at *Bowls* as securely, as accompanied with an Hundred, not being in the least Danger of being taken by an *Escape-Warrant*: Whereas formerly they dare not go over the *Ditch* on the *South-side*, that being their Stint, and they now enjoy unmolested the Benefit of the green Fields, and walk uncontroll'd. Let any impartial Man judge, which of these two sorts of Men are most beholden to each other; truly, in my Opinion the *Shelterers* have not only paid their Obligation to the *Benchers* with *Interest* upon *Interest*, but upon a Ballance of the whole, I think they brought the *Benchers* indebted to them. Sure that Man that had but an Hundred Pound given him, is more to be Com-

 mended,

mended, if by his Induſtry, he increaſes it to a Thouſand, than he, who by his Toil has made himſelf Maſter of Twenty Pounds, and will not ſtrive to augment it, but idly Laviſh it away.

Notwithſtanding the *Shelterers* have been very great Sufferers, have been Fin'd and Impriſon'd for preſerving and defending their Rights; yet ſome of the *Benchers* have prov'd ſo Ingrateful, that they have not only refus'd to Contribute toward the Support and Relief of theſe poor Wretches, but have prevented others from ſending their Charity, upbraiding and exclaiming againſt theſe miſerable Creatures, tho' they are ſerviceable at the ſame time, that were it not for them, they would be Stifled, and not have a Mouthful of freſh Air. Nay, ſo Jealous are theſe poor Souls of having their Priviledges infring'd, that they often Expel ſome of their own *Fraternity* upon Suſpicion, and if any Proof can be brought againſt them, they ſhow 'em no Compaſſion, thinking no Treatment too Vile for their Treachery. And as there are Three principal *Avenues* or *Entries* to the *Mint*, ſo have they Three *Clubs*, or *Meetings*, to Try and Decide whatever ſhall happen in their Diviſion. But of them hereafter.

## III. *Of the MINTERS.*

The *Minters* are thoſe who have been Priſoners formerly, and reſide there ſtill; or elſe they are Houſekeepers, who dwell there, and go abroad at their Pleaſure. Of the latter, *Sammy Greaves*, a good-humour'd hearty *Cock*, who fears not to ſhow his Face before a Lord-Mayor, God bleſs him: but he has a Wife, and ſhe is a ——, ſo I'll ſay no more of her. Neither muſt I paſs by that facetious, jolly old Fellow, Daddy *Cowper*; for not to mention him, would be to do his Virtues wrong. He is upwards of Seventy Years of Age, and

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of a ſtrong, hail Conſtitution; to preſerve which, he ſticks to the old Rule of *going to Bed with the Lark, and riſing again with the ſame:* He is a *Glover* and *Leather-Breeches-maker* by Trade; he can earn Ten Shillings every Morning, before Ten other Perſons are out of their Beds; his Voice is as ſtrong as one of Five and I muſt own, his Judgment is not Deſpicable. *Dear* Daddy, *May your Health continue in its priſtine ſtate; may you Live long and happy; and before you make your Exit, may you leave a Race behind you, endew'd with your own Qualities to keep up your Name. And for you,* Sam. Greaves, *fail not, as you ſhall anſwer the contrary at your peril, to draw your right ſound Beer for my Daddy* Cowper; Cowper! *the beſt of Cuſtomers; the Life and Soul of all Company; the Wonder of all that ſee thee, and the Pride and Glory of Old Age! Thou reviveſt the drooping Spirits of the Afflicted; thy Mirth baniſhes Sorrow; Melancholly takes Wing at thy approach; and thy very Countenance makes us Chearful.* O thou Miracle of Men never to be forgotten!

## IV. *Of the INHABITANTS.*

The Multitude of the *Inhabitants* is ſo great, 'tis impoſſible to Treat diſtinctly of every particular Perſon; for, *ſo many Men, ſo many Minds:* And if ſuch variety of Humours in this Sex, what muſt there be among the *Females*, who make up Four Parts in Nine, at leaſt? For the generality of 'em, they are willing to entertain all that will come to them; very Courteous and Obliging as long as your *Money* laſt; reſpect you while a Stranger, (*that is, for the firſt time they ſee you*) for afterwards 'tis *Hail Fellow, well met*; and they are as well Skill'd in the Art of Flattery, as if they had been bred up Courtiers: None can play the *Hypocrite* better than they; for, What is it they will not do to gain any

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by you? They'll Bawd for you, be either *Pimp* or *Paunder*; Wheedle *you*, Back-bite your Neighbour, and Fawn upon *you* like your *Spaniel*; Speak all the good things imaginable before your Face, and for a *Mug of Ale*, traduce *you* behind your Back. In short, they are thorough-pac'd in every Degree, and so well vers'd in any Point of *Villany*, that nothing comes amiss to them. *This* is their Character in *Epitome*; their Effigies in *Miniature*. But the Reader must understand, that all the *Inhabitants* do not Answer this Description, I mean only those who are the Scum and Dregs of the rest, who notwithstanding bear equal Sway with them, as being the *major-part*; and they are very distinguishable, therefore the easier to be avoided. A Man may meet with some good Company among the 3 Sorts before-mention'd, who are affable, good-natur'd, well-bred, but you must not be taken up so much with them, as not to suffer the *meaner* Sort, or more *illiterate* to Speak to you, as you tender your Peace and Quietness during your Abode among them.

## V. *Of their Ways and Customs.*

When any Man becomes a *Shelterer*, he either takes a *House*, or *Lodging*; and truly the former is most easily obtain'd, and much more commodious and satisfactory than the latter; tho' 'tis at present a very difficult matter to get either, the *Mint* is so crowded; however, I shall describe the nature of them both.

To begin with the First, If your *Landlord* Lets you a House, you must not be surpriz'd if he asks (nay, he will have) twice as much as if you were in another place; you must not complain of being at a *Rack-Rent*, if you have a mind to continue; 'twill avail nothing, for there's no Remedy. Besides, you must not expect to *enter* without *paying a Fine*, more or less, and sometimes

times a *Quarter's-Rent* before-hand, so exorbitant are they in their Demands. Moreover, you shall be oblig'd to *repair* the House in due Season; and tho' you lay but never so much upon it, make what Improvements you think fit; nay, tho' you render it three times as Convenient as when you came into it, yet you have but your *Labour* and Expences for your Pains; not one *Penny* will be allow'd for what you have done, no not so much as *Thanks* for it. But what you will judge most Severe is, that you shall have it but from one *Quarter's-end* to another; and if you fail to *Pay the Rent* the Day on which it becomes Due, expect your Goods to be Seiz'd upon the next; nay, after all, shou'd another bid more than you, tho' *you* are in *Possession*, you must Pay what the other raises you to, or turn out. Now, if *they* that take Houses bear so great a Burden, then judge how hard it must light upon those who are *Lodgers*; these are the greatest Sufferers; *they* must make up the *Losses* of the former; and I can Assure the Reader, that *Chamber-Rent* is much Cheaper about the *Court*, (*comparatively*) or, the middle of the *City*, than it is in this place. Neither can you get a Lodging here for less time than a Fortnight, and frequently you must take it *Monthly*; but Bargain for what Time you will, you must expect to *Pay* before-hand, and have but few or no Conveniencies allow'd you. It signifies but little whether you have a Name or no, for they take Care you shall not run in their Debt; and shou'd you ask 'em to Trust you, they'll Cry, *Yes, as far as we can throw you: You are here to Day and gone to Morrow. No, no, bring ready Money, or leave a Pledge, and welcome; but without either of them, we do not desire your Company.* This is the Treatment they show you in *your Necessity*; and tho' *you* have spent never so much *Money*, 'tis all one, *you* are Despis'd, and no Notice taken of you. There are some who when *they*

you have Mony will often truſt you, (Old *Nick* give them thanks for their Kindneſs) in Expectation of your Cuſtom; and if you accept this offer, they will always eſteem you under an obligation to them, and you ſhall hear of it upon occaſion: And you may eſteem it a Miracle to be *Thirty Shillings* in their Debt. There lately happened an Inſtance of what I have ſaid; *viz.*

*A certain Lady who keeps Houſe in the* Mint, *Ow'd a* Butcher *Twenty Shillings, and her Rents not coming in ſo punctual as expected, ſhe could not pay the greaſy Rogue according to Promiſe; upon which he refus'd to give her any further Credit, by which means the* Jack *ſtood ſtill for Ten Days. Now, the Lady was drove to her laſt ſhift, in order to conceal this Misfortune from her Neighbours, and keep up her Reputation among them, ſhe began to conſider, and at laſt thought it more adviſeable to leave her fine* Scarf *as a Hoſtage for the Twenty Shillings, a* Shoulder *of* Mutton, *and a* Buſhel *of* Coals, *till they, or an Equivalent, ſhould be return'd. Thus poor* Jack *was employ'd for a ſmall time; and the Smoke demonſtrated, that the Houſe was not always without Fire; and the Lady thought herſelf very ſecure from her Neighbours knowing what Hardſhips ſhe was reduc'd to: But, alas! how ſoon are we deceiv'd in our Expectations! the* Scarf *was not in the* Butcher's *poſſeſſion Half an Hour, but he expos'd it to all the Comers and Goers, as a* Raree-ſhow. *So the Story took Wind, but the Lady regarded it not.*

I believe a Man may venture to conclude, without being cenſured for to Judge raſhly, that theſe people will ſcarce get nearer Heaven tha they are preſent, except what Advances they may make at *Tiburn*, *Kingſtone*, or ſome ſuch Place; for not to take cognizance of their Actions, 'tis viſible they have as little Faith as either *Turk* or *Jew*, and without that, 'tis impoſſible to ueach the Manſions above.

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VI *Of*

## VI. *Of their Nature and Temper.*

Having ſpoke very much in a few Words, concerning the *Inhabitants*, the Reader may think there can be but little more ſaid that relates to them; I ſhall therefore briefly Speak of their Nature and Temper.

They are a ſort of *Animals* made up of all the ill Qualities incident to Mankind; They are ſubject to every *ill Diſpoſition of Mind*, and addicted to all manner of *Vice*. 'Tis not ſafe to put any *Confidence* in them; for tho' they dare not be known to be *Treacherous*, yet, for a ſmall Reward, they will *clandeſtinely Betray you*. They are *Inſolent*, *Saucy*, and *Impertinent*, verifying the Old Proverb, *Proud and Beggarly*; they are highly Opinionated of themſelves; very *Vindictive*, and care not what baſe Means they purſue, to obtain their Ends: *Scolding* and *Brawling* are their Two Favourites; and there is no People under the Sun ſo *Litidious*. They are *idle*, *looſe*, and *ſlothful*, and naturally inclin'd to *Filth* and *Naſtineſs*: They will *Faſt* one Day to get *Drunk* the next, and let their *Backs* go uncover'd to make *Funnels* of their *Throats*. *Money* and *they*, are not very intimately acquainted; and when they are *Maſters of it*, think every Minute an Hour, till they get to an *Ale-Houſe* to Spend it.

This is the True Deſcription of that *many-Headed-Monſter*, *the* Mob *of the Mint*: Nor is their Temper any ways diſproportionable, but congruous, and ſuitable to their *Nature*. They are *Dogged*, *Peeviſh*, and *Moroſe*, and *Surly* to the laſt Degree; if at any time they receive a *Favour*, they fail not to Revile and Spurn at the *Giver*. Their Countenances are Sour, and you may perceive their Conditions in their Faces; they never *Forget*, or *Forgive* an *Injury*, but will watch an *Opportunity* to return it; for *Revenge* is their dear Darling.

*Friendſhip* they profeſs, but will not practice; and it goes againſt their Grain to own an Obligation. As for the Women, they are Proud, Talkative, (a Quality inherent to the Sex) Self-conceited and Laſcivious, prone to all manner of Lewdneſs; and they have the moſt convenient Opportunity to accompliſh their Deſigns that can be. For, ſince their Husbands cannot go abroad, they Sollicit and manage their Buſineſs for them; and under the Notion of *Compounding* their *Debts*, create *new Ones* where they can get Credit: They *lay open their Husbands Caſe* to their *Lawyer*; and if they lye out a Night or two (no matter with whom) no Fault muſt be found with them, for the Husband, good Man, knows that Money cannot be had ſo readily at the firſt time of asking: Beſides what *Pettifogger* or *Attorney*, will do his work without a Fee? What a hopeful progeny much ſuch wicked Parents produce? Nay to give them their due, they take as little care about the Education of their Children, as any People whatever. They are very aſſiduous in planting a mortal Averſion to *Bum-Bailiffs* in the Minds of their Young Ones; for, as other People terrify their Children with the tremendous Names of *Bugaboo*, and *Raw-Head* and *Bloody Bones*, ſo they uſe theirs with the hideous Word *BAILIFF*; and they have ſuch natural Antipathy to theſe curſed *Inſects*, that when they have them within their Power, they make them Senſible of their Abhorrence to them, by the double Puniſhment they inflict upon them, as ſhall be ſhown in the following Head.

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VII. *Of*

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## VII. *Of their* Clubs *and* Meetings, *and the manner of Puniſhing a* BAILIFF.

There are Three principal Ways, by which you come into the *Mint*; and at or near every one of theſe *Entries*, there is a *Club*, or *Meeting* of the *Shelterers*: One in *Mint-ſtreet*, a Second in *White-Croſs-ſtreet*, and a Third near the Two *Fighting Cocks*. They aſſemble together at leaſt Twice a Week; neither does one intrude upon, or meddle with what happens within the Precincts of another, but every Body takes Cognizance of what Offence is committed within the Limits of his own *Ward*. The principal Deſign of keeping theſe *Clubs* was, not only to Puniſh the *Bailiffs*, but for another good End, by which it will appear (as I promis'd before) that the *Mint* was always Superior and Preferable to the *Fryars*, or other places of Priviledge; For they refuſe not to ſuffer a Warrant to be Serv'd within their Juriſdiction, provided it is not deſign'd to Trepan ſome Perſon that is in there for Debt; neither will they Protect thoſe who have a *Comiſſion* of *Bankrupt* out againſt them, but will ſuffer them, or their Effects, to be carried away by a *Conſtable*, without Moleſtation. And further, to manifeſt they have no ſiniſter Deſign in keeping up their Priviledges, will appear by their allowing any *Vagabond* who comes within the Deſcription of the *Act*, to be ſent for a *Solaier*. Nor will they Harbour any Perſon who has run away from his *Bail*, but deliver him up to thoſe who make their Application to the *Clubs*. Hence it is viſible, that their main Intent is to Defend thoſe from a Priſon, who have not Sufficient to Pay their Creditors, who are ſo very *voracious*, as to have the Skin off their Bones, by endeavouring to caſt 'em into a worſe place than their Graves. For *here* all the Pains and Anxieties of Mind and Body do ceaſe;

but in a *Goal*, they increaſe Daily, ſometimes to the Ruin both of Soul and Body.

'Tis to be Obſerved, That in every *Club* there is a *Steward*, who upon any Tryal ſits as *Judge* or *Preſident*, attended by Six *Beadles* with their long Staves headed with Silver. Nor is any Perſon taken upon Suſpicion, whether *Bailiff*, *Setter*, or *Follower*, Condemn'd without Proof; ſo Juſt are they in their Proceedings.

When they lay hold of a Perſon, the *Club* is inſtantly Summon'd, and the Party Accus'd, deſir'd to Strip from Head to Toe, and turn out the inſide of his Pockets, producing his Papers, *&c.* If he refuſe ſo to do, the *Beadles* perform it for him; and they are very careful that he loſes nothing, for whatever Money, or thing of Value is about him, is return'd to him. If after a diligent, and narrow Scrutiny, they find no *Warrants*, *Writs*, or *Actions* about him, here (as in all Courts of Judicature) he is ask'd, *Who, and what he is, the Place of his Abode*, &c. As ſoon as he has Satisfied them herein, they Depute ſome Truſty Fellow, who goes near the place where the Priſoner directs them; and being a crafty, cunning Rogue, brings the matter about, by enquiring if ſuch a Perſon who is a *Sheriffs* Officer, does not Live thereabout; and ceaſes not till he is fully Satisfy'd, whether he be *Baliff*, *Setter*, or *Follower*; if either of the Two latter, he is never favour'd in his Execution; and the Reaſon they alledge is, That the *Baliff* only does his Duty, and has Authority for it; but the *Follower* and *Setter* have not, therefore often meet with double Puniſhment.

But to return; The Meſſenger having got what Intelligence he can, comes back, and makes his Report accordingly; and if the Perſon be not as they ſuſpect him, then he is diſcharg'd; tho' there is Treachery often in this way, by the Meſſenger's being Brib'd to make a falſe Report; but Woe unto him if he be di-

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ſcover'd; But if the Priſoner be found to be a *Bailiff*, *Setter*, or *Bailiff*'s *Follower*, then is he us'd as mention'd in the following Relation of one *Alexander* ——— a *Copper-ſmith*.

This *Alexander* had brought over 900 *l.* of Goods with him into the *Mint*, and ſo joyned among the *Shelterers* for a Twelve-Month; during which time, he came acquainted with every Body in the Place, and at laſt Compounded his Debts, and got out. Now, what does this Ungrateful, this Treacherous Mungrel do, but turns *Bum-Bailiff*, (tho' it proved an ill Turn for him) and not only takes *Eſaape-Warrants* and *Writs*, againſt the *Benchers* and *Shelterers*, but skulks up and down about the Edges of the *Mint*, watching like a *Vulture* for his Prey, and lying *perdue* to Snap up the firſt that ſhould Bolt out: But it chanc'd he was taken, and as a juſt Reward for his Ingratitude, puniſh'd in the following manner.

*Being brought before the Preſident of the Club, he was ſearch'd, and ſeven* Warrants *and* Actions *found about him, which were to apprehend Perſons in the* Mint; *he was Condemned, Sentenced, and deliver'd into the Hands of the Executioners, or* Spirits, *which are the* Beadles, *ſo called from the frightful Habits they put on to diſguiſe them; they've a Rug or Blanket made in ſhape of a Morning-Gown, or rather like a Seaman's Watch-Coat, which reaches down to their Toes, and their Faces and Heads are covered over with a Piece of the ſame, with Holes cut in it for their Eyes, Mouth, and Noſe, by which it reſembles a Mask or Viſard.*

*But thus habited, the Priſoner was committed to them, accompanied with Four or Five Thouſand People at leaſt, which roſe in a Minute*; *the* Spirits *carried him to every* Pump *in the* Mint, *at each of which he was very well waſh'd, the* Apprentices *and* Boys *made all ready to receive him, and had the Pumps filled with Water againſt he came*: *Two*

*of the* Spirits *went before, to clear the Way, Two behind to keep off the Mob, and the other two secured and held him under every Pump. But, this was but a Prologue, or a Beginning of his Sufferings. This part of the Ceremony being over, he was conducted to the* Ditch-side, *the antient Limits of the* Mint, *and there,* Nolens-Volens, *whether he wou'd or no, was duck'd over Head and Ears thrice in that filthy Place; nor did they suffer him to pull off his Cloaths. This done, they caused him to cleanse his Face, and administred the following Oath which they obliged him to take.*

I Alexander- ----- *do confess my self a* Rogue *by my profession, and do solemnly Swear before G---D that I have greatly injured her Majesty's good and Liege People, and that from the Bottom of my Heart, I am sorry for the same. Moreover I do protest, that I never will* Arrest, *or cause to be* Arrested, *any Person who is in, or belongs to the* Mint, *either directly or indirectly; but will give Notice of any* Warrant, Writ *or* Action, *that I know is against any* Bencher, Shelterer, *or* Minter. So help me G----D.

Having so said, he kissed the Book which was a Brick-bat, daubed over with a *Sir-reverence*; this they rub about his Face and sometimes in his Mouth. The Ceremony thus ended he was dismissed. But if at parting the Prisoner forgets to pay the *Spirits* their Fees; that is, if he bribes them not, then the Apprentices and Women cause him to undergo the punishment twice, but if he be liberal, he is conducted out of the Bounds of the *Mint*, and so escapes a second Ditching.



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## VIII: *Of the MINT in General.*

It muſt be confeſs'd, that he who can walk to the utmoſt Extincts of the *Mint*, is ſtill under Reſtraint, but as the Pleaſure and Satisfaction of Liberty conſiſts in Contentment of Mind, he that is endued therewith may live in the *Mint* as well as any where elſe: For what Enticement, what Variety have you in *London*, which may not be found in the *Mint*? What Paſtimes, what Sports, Allurements and Diverſions have you *Citizens* and *Suburbians*, which we have not here? Tho' not in ſuch plenty; in which we have this Advantage, that whereas you are clog'd and Surfeited with ſo much, we have but juſt enough, which renders it more acceptable, pleaſing, & delightful. Does the *Citt* value himſelf for his *Royal-Exchange*; little thinking, that whilſt he is Bartering there, his Wife is Conſummating what ſhe bargain'd for before. So have we our *Square*, and uſual Houſes of meeting, and within Smell of our Habitations: And where many a Rich Merchant walks in the Year, without fear of a Searjeant's plucking him by the Coat. They go to *Mary-bone* and *Iſlington* to Bowls, *we* to *Cuperts* and *Moor-ſhanks*; *they* boaſt their *Sun-Tavern* behind the *Exchange*, *we* have our Freind *Iſaac* behind our *Square*, who has Wine and Brandy of the beſt. Have they e'er a rich *Banker* that cheated his Creditors? Why we can match him with a S——ome Body? You boaſt your *Lombard Street*; ſo do *we*; but with this Difference *JUSTICE* is not aſhamed to ſhow her Face in Hours by Night or Day. *You* have a very famous put-together-Honſe in the City; *we* have a Noted *Baudy Houſe* as you enter into St. *George*'s Fields; & as *you* have *Drury-Lane*, *Wild-ſtreet*, and other Places for the Ladies of Pleaſure, *we* but croſs over the Ditch, and at a Whiſtle, can have 20 or 30 Brace of *Marlins* in an Inſtant: In ſhort, *we* can equal *you* in every reſpect, in every way, whether lawful or unlawful, which tends to human Life. *Bridges-ſtreet*, and *Charing Croſs*, are uſual Rendevouz where you go to throw a *merry Main*, and try whether the Money you have be yours or another Body's; there you meet with your *Sharpers* to *Butter a Cul*; Nor are we behind hand with you in this point; for at the Sign of the *Angel*, *we* can play all Day and Night too; and honeſt *Jack* can *top* or *palm* with any Man; he has your *high* and *low*, *flat* and *ſmooth*: But I care not to Drink after

my Landlord, leſt I ſhould get more than I deſire, challenge me with finding his Palate. While I go *Mulbery*, or *Spring-Garden*, we recreate our ſelves at t of the *Chimney-Sweeper*, or at the *Red-Cow*; but if you ſophy has taught you to be frugal, and not drink brewed but content your ſelves with a Mug of *Nappy-Ale*, w *George* in *Eaſt-Cheap*, the *Horſeſhoe* in *blow-bladder-ſtreet*, tain by *Clare-Market*, or, the *Lyon* and *Bell*, in *Red-Li* cannot draw better Beer than *Sam. Greaves* at the *Sur ter* or my Friend *China* at the *Red-Roſe*. While you gaining at *Garraway*'s we can talk at *Farra*'s, and ſee ev dy that paſſes by: If at any Time we get a *Run*, C *Gonorrhea*, we have no neceſſity to go near *Ludgate*, C *Minories*; we have as eminent a *Quack* among us as any can produce; who pretends to as much knowledge in affairs, and yet has as little skill as your old Freind the tor, who gives you an *Advertiſment* now and then with er and Thumb before it inſtead of a *N. B.* to make it the remarkable. Yes, Faith Doctor *T—ham* will cure the inveterate, moſt confirm'd Pox without Fluxing, by the 8 Doſes of Phyſick, without a Grain of *Mercury* but a ſu Quantity of *Calomel*. And herein we excell you again, not to mention his Vigour in his youthful Days (for he kiſſe rice in 24 Hours for 20 Years Succeſſively, if you believe w he ſays) he could formerly have told you any forreign l vs a Week before it came over in the Packets, for he retain certain Familiars whom he fed with Wine and Mackroons, b this Dyet proving too expenſive, and there being an *Act* of *Parliament* againſt publick Wagers, he thought it not wort his while to keep them any longer, ſo diſmiſs'd them: Now any of your *Star-Gazers*, can your famous *Moor-fields* A ger tell, who pretending to give other people Intellig tle thinks who is at the ſame time in his own Wife

To conclude we have as many Trades and Callings ny People for the bigneſs of the Place, as you have o ther Side of the Water; and you exceed us in nothi Number of Chairs and Coaches.

——— *Si quid noviſti rectius eſtis Candidus imperti.*

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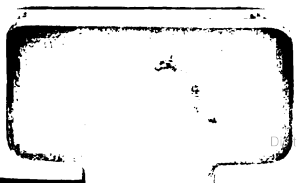
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